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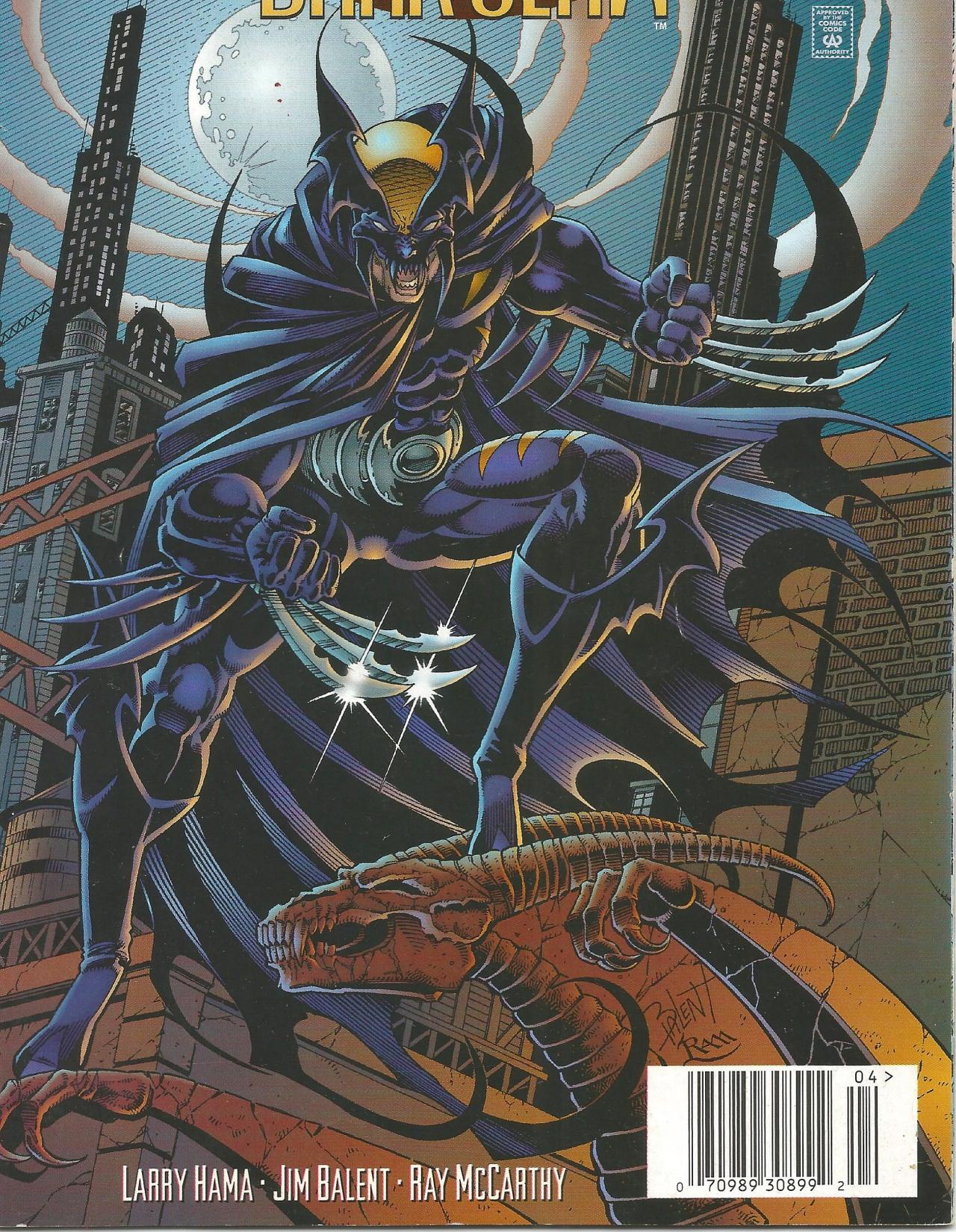
LEGENDS OF THE

DARK CLAW

#1
APR 96

\$1.95 US
\$2.75 CAN

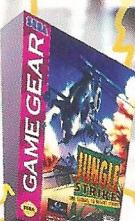
APPROVED BY
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY



LARRY HAMA · JIM BAENT · RAY McCARTHY

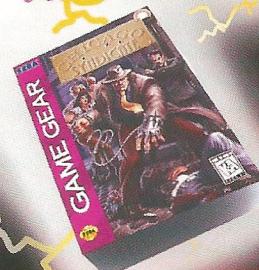


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YOU'RE
ABOUT TO BE
A WAS!

THROUGH
A
GLASS
WALKWAY

WRITER: LARRY HAMA
PENCILLER: JIM BALENT
INKER: RAY McCARTHY
COLORIST: GARRAHY
PATT
BILL
LETTERER: OAKLEY

on
PIKLE
CAT
CAT
PERFUME
IN TOWN
MORNING HOTEL
COTTON
WINE
LIVER
SODA
ZES
WIG
WIG
WIG

OH, MY!!

HOW UNCHARACTERISTICALLY DROLL!!

HAVE WE BEEN STAYING UP LATE AND WATCHING THE COMEDY CHANNEL?

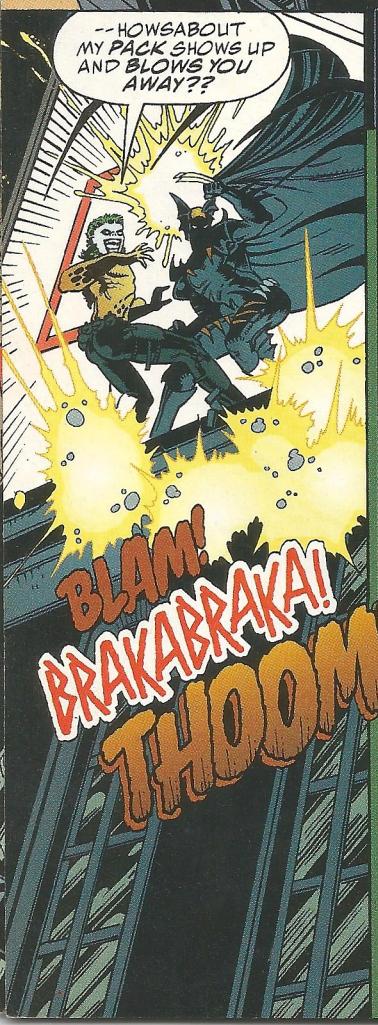
SPAK!

POP!

SPOK!

ASSOCIATE
EDITOR: JORDAN B.
GORFINKEL

EDITOR: DENNIS
O'NEILL



A NEW BREED OF GOTHIC

"Metallica meets Sisters Of Mercy, awesome." METAL HAMMER (4.5 FISTS)

PARADISE LOST

draconian times

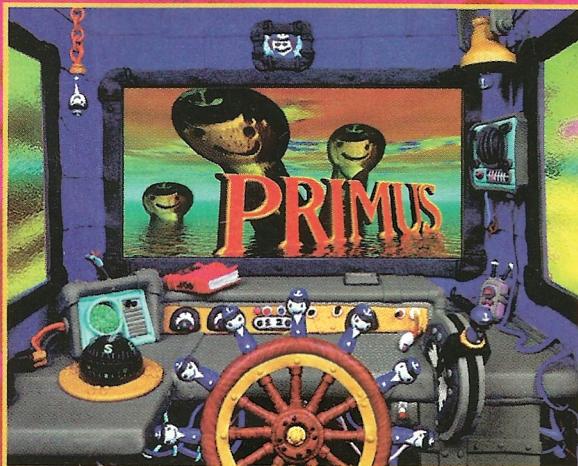
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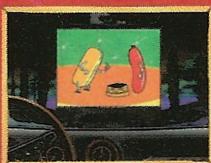
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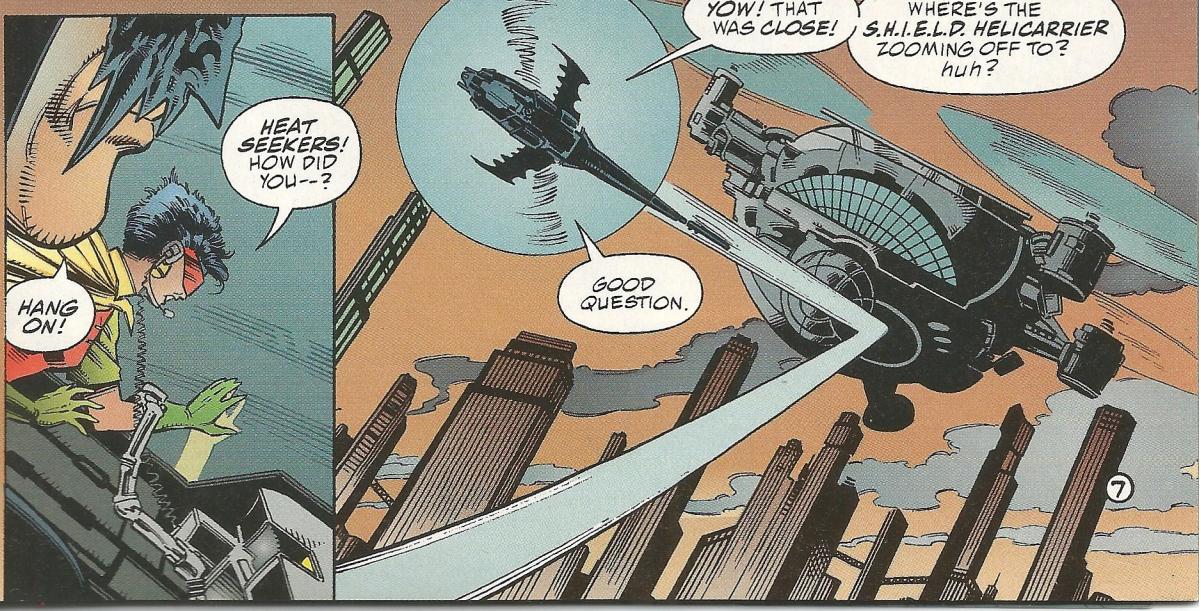


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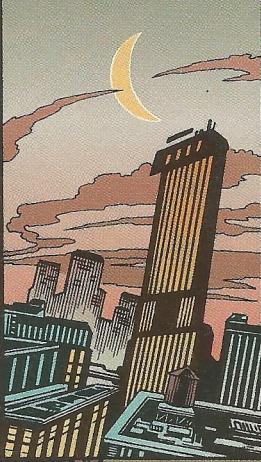
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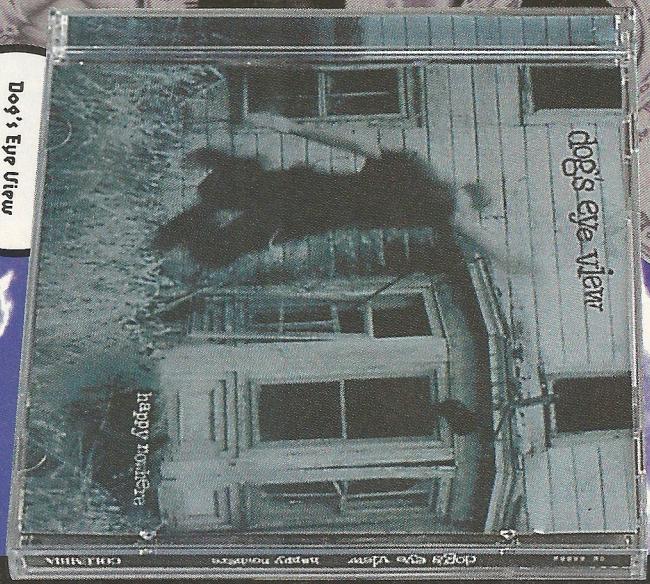
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MEANWHILE, IN THE ARTSY-TRENDY SECTION OF GOTHAM...



take a look-see



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The Brooklyn Side
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Happy Nowhere
Columbia

Sam Goody

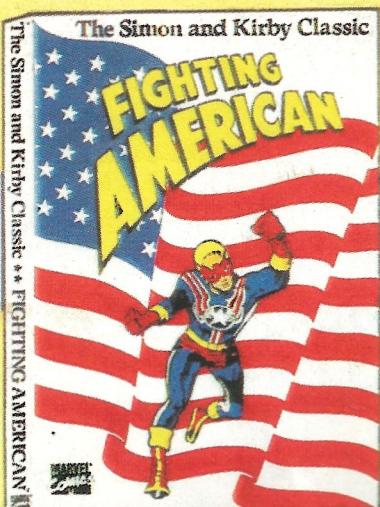
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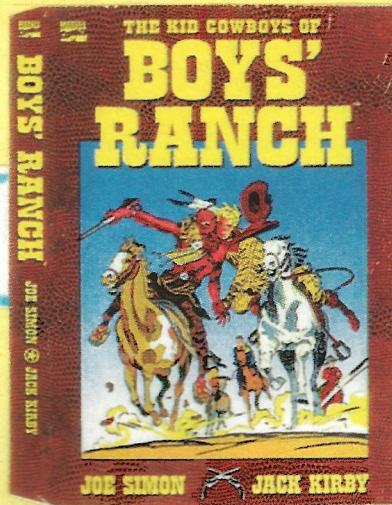
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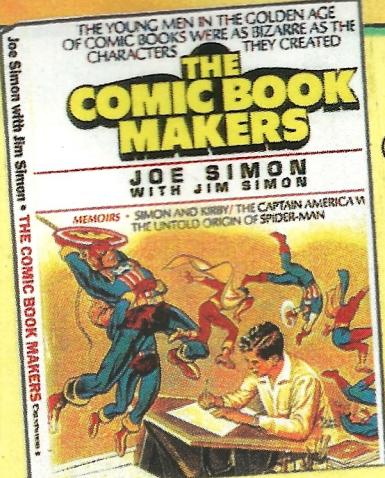
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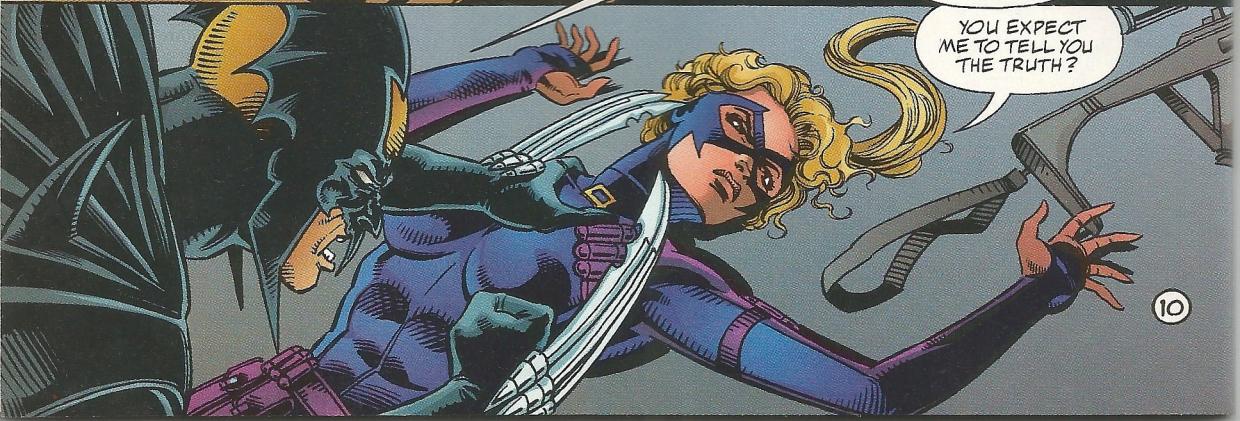
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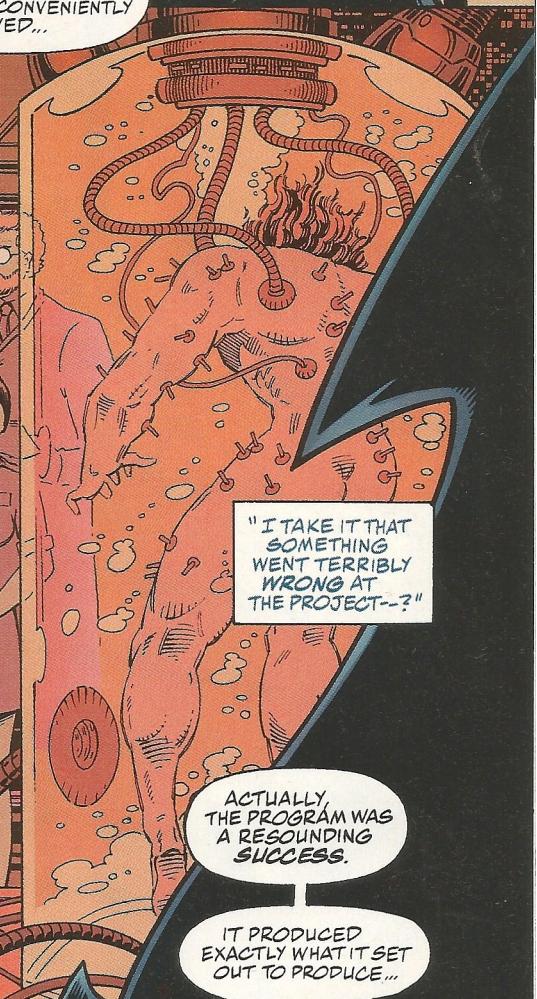
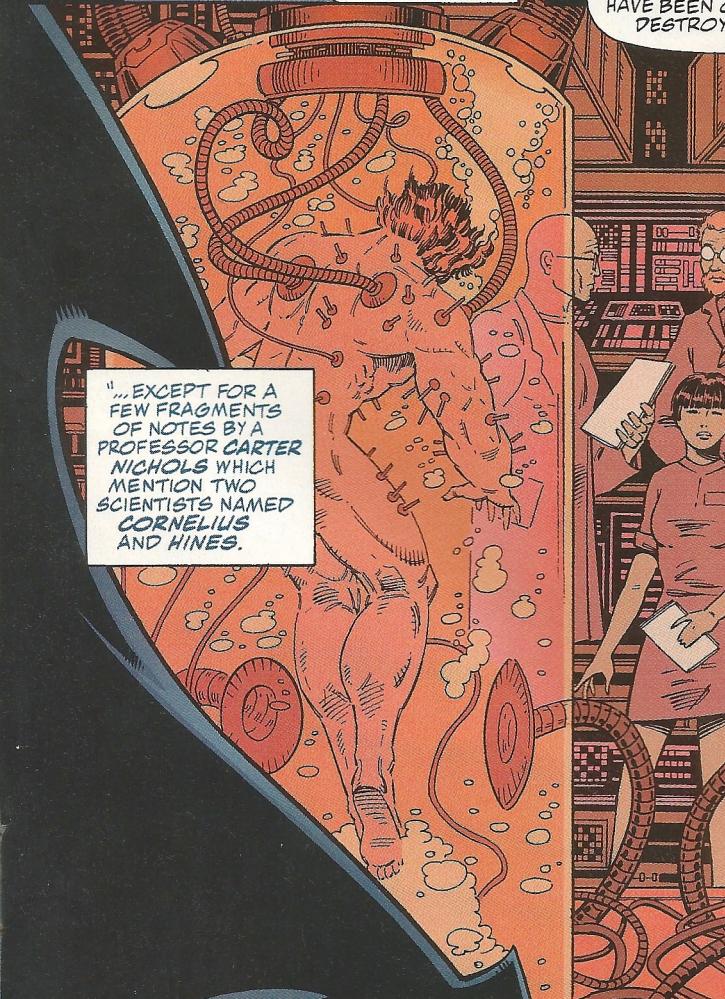
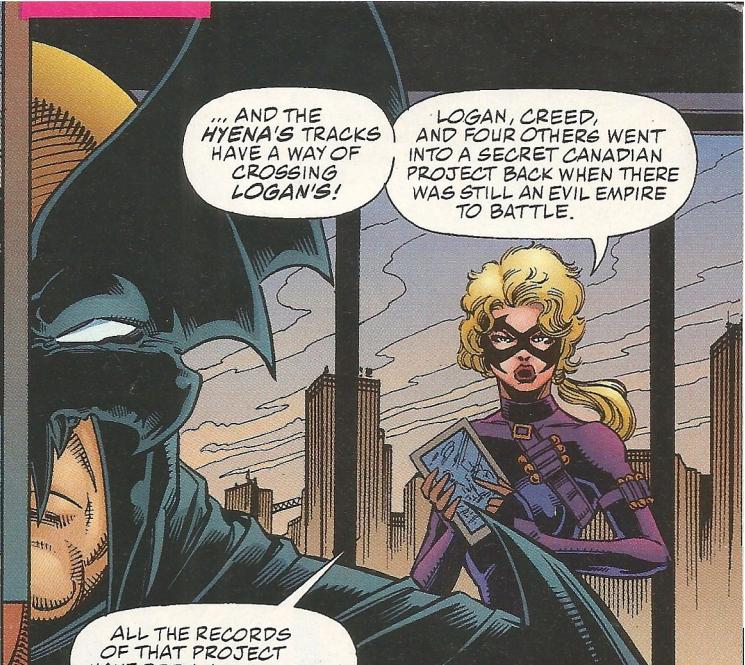
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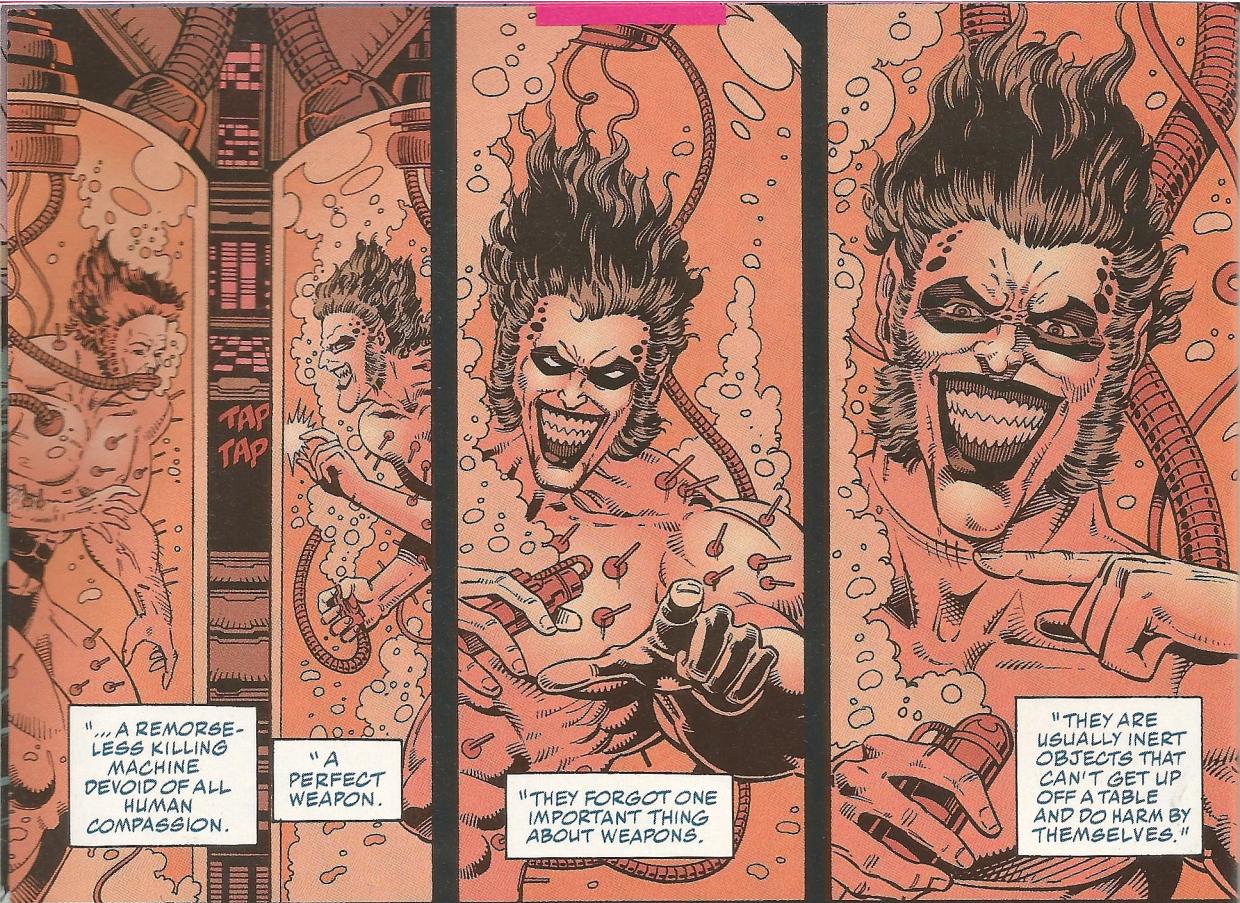
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IT PRODUCED EXACTLY WHAT IT SET OUT TO PRODUCE...



EEEEE!

DON'T PANIC ON ME, MS. DANVERS--!

THIS IS A PNEUMATIC TUBE WITH AN AIR-CUSHION AT THE BOTTOM.



WE ARE GOING DEEP BELOW THE BED-ROCK OF GOTHAM, DOWN TO A LAIR THAT ONLY TWO OTHER PEOPLE HAVE EVER SEEN OR EVEN HEARD OF--



--WELCOME TO THE BARROW.

THAT PORTRAIT-- IT'S THE SAME AS THE ONE IN YOUR BEDROOM...

...ARE THEY YOUR PARENTS?

I WAS FIVE YEARS OLD WHEN THEY WERE SHOT DOWN IN FRONT OF ME BY AN ARMED ROBBER.

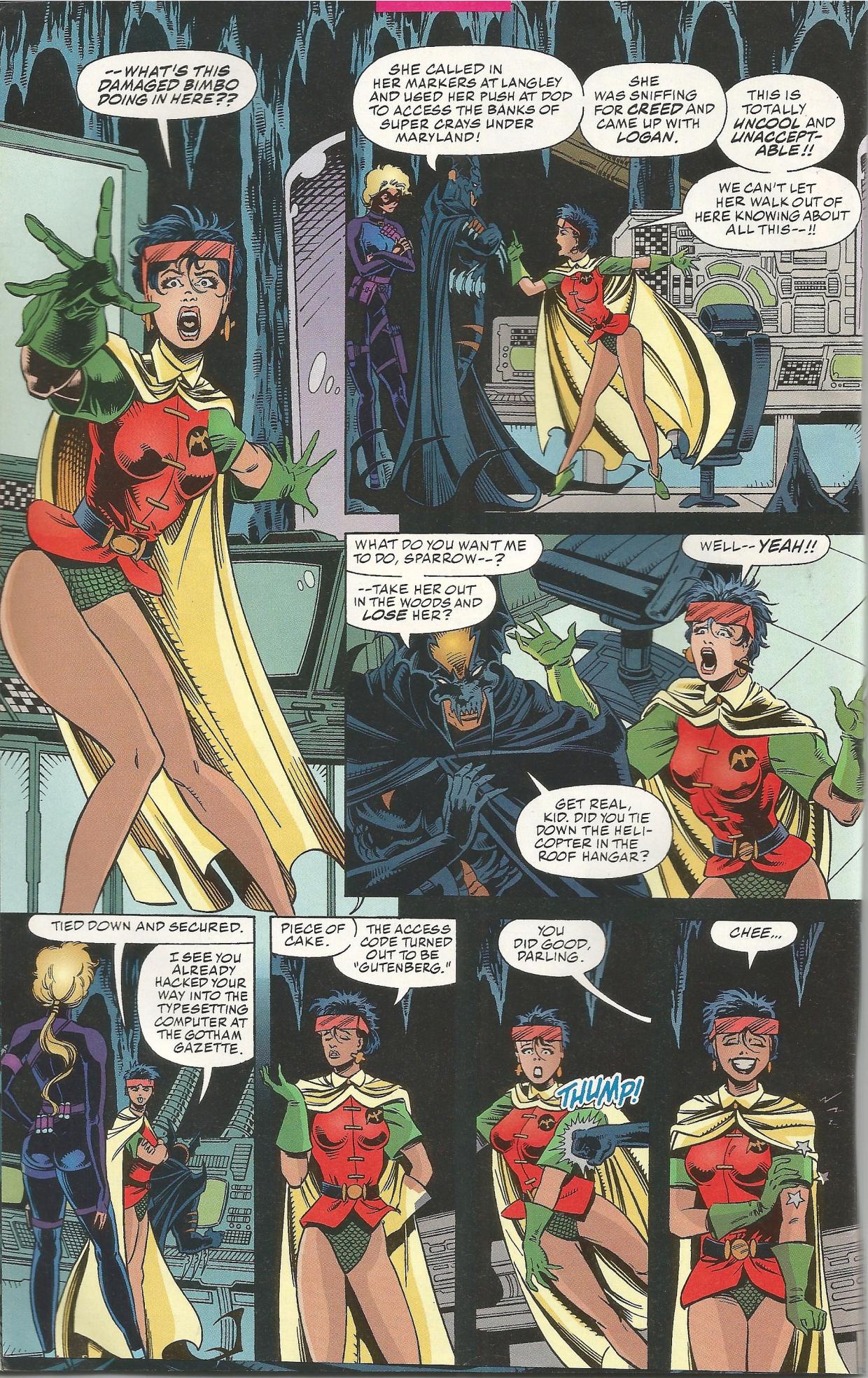
I WAS SENT TO LIVE WITH MY UNCLE IN ALBERTA, UP NEAR BUFFALO WOOD. HE WAS A MOUNTIE. SOME POACHERS AMBUSHED HIM AND LEFT HIM TO DIE IN THE SNOW. THE RCMP SENT ME TO A HOME RUN BY NUNS. AS SOON AS I WAS OLD ENOUGH, I SIGNED UP FOR THE AIR FORCE--

--ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE SECURITY!

CREED WAS IN THE SAME OUTFIT! THAT WAS THE LINK! THAT'S WHERE YOU--

HEY--!!





WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR IN THE GAZETTE COMPUTER?

WHEN I TANGLED WITH THE HYENA AT THE PRINTING PLANT, I NOTICED THAT CREED WAS WEARING A STATIC ELECTRICITY DISCHARGE WIRE ON HIS WRIST.

HE WASN'T THERE TO PLANT A BOMB AT ALL-- HE WAS THERE TO GO INSIDE THE GUTS OF A COMPUTER--

--THE DISCHARGE WIRE IS TO PREVENT DAMAGE TO THE MEMORY.

HE'S A REAL JOKER, 'CLAW--

PUNCH IT UP, SPARROW!

--MAYBE HE WAS MESSING WITH THE HEAD-LINES FOR THE MORNING PAPER?

SO, WHY GO TO ALL THAT TROUBLE TO INTERFERE WITH THE TYPOGRAPHY OF THE NEWSPAPER?

ALREADY PUNCHED, AWESOME ONE!

WHUZZIS, A REBUS?

The Gotham Gazette AF1+NaCN=

"AF1" IS AIR FORCE 1-- THE PRESIDENT'S PLANE!

AND "NaCN" IS SODIUM CYANIDE-- A DEADLY POISON!

THE PRESIDENT IS IN GOTHAM AND DUE TO FLY BACK TO WASHINGTON IN TWENTY MINUTES!

TWENTY MINUTES
LATER, AT GOTHAM
INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORT...

AIR FORCE 1, YOU
HAVE PRIORITY
CLEARANCE TO TAKE OFF
FROM RUNWAY 2!

ROGER THAT,
TOWER! DO WE
HAVE A GREEN LIGHT
FROM SECURITY?

NEGATIVE! WE HAVE AN
UNIDENTIFIED HELICOPTER OVER
THE FIELD ON AN INTERCEPT
WITH AF1!

THAT THING DIDN'T SHOW
UP ON RADAR! IT MUST BE
RUNNING A THIRD GENERA-
TION PASSIVE ECM
SUITE!

WE HAVE A BOGEY INTERCEPT!
ABORT THE TAKEOFF!

WE CAN'T! TOO MUCH
VELOCITY AND NOT ENOUGH
RUNWAY! WE'RE
COMMITTED!!

SITUATION
RED! SECURE THE
QUARTERBACK!

PULL
ALONGSIDE
AND MATCH
SPEED,
SPARROW!

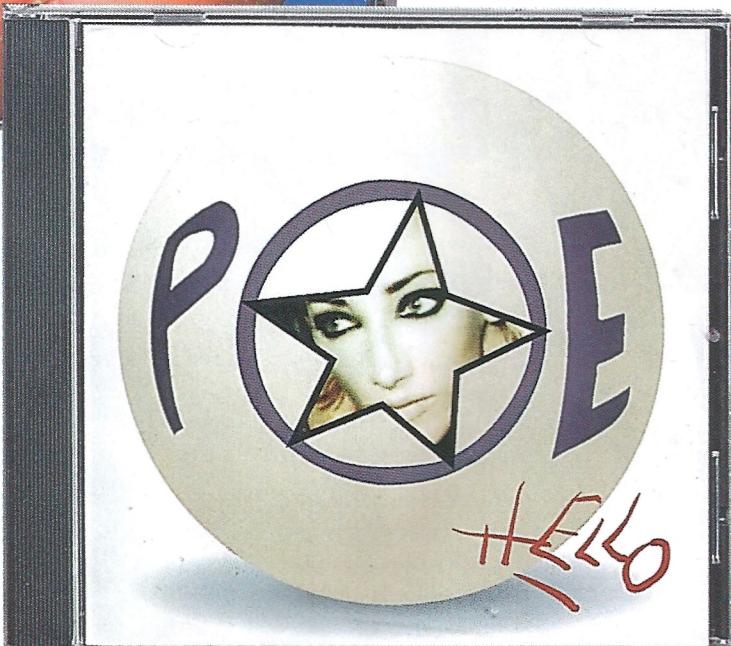
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THING IS PUTTING OUT
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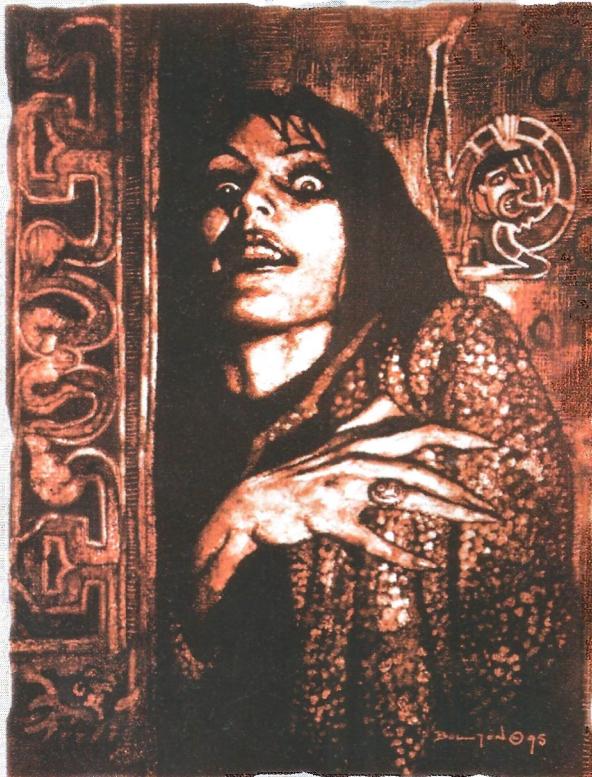
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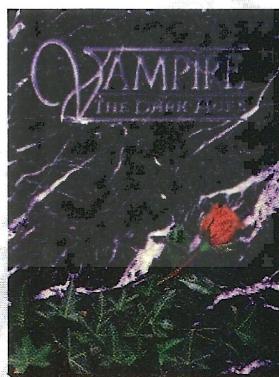


VAMPIRE™ THE DARK AGES



Five years ago White Wolf turned the world of role playing games upside down with the release of **Vampire: The Masquerade**, the best-selling, critically acclaimed storytelling game of personal horror.

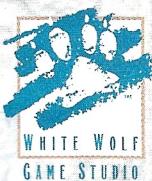
Now **Vampire: The Dark Ages** takes you to the twelfth century when the Kindred ruled as lords. Unfettered by any Masquerade, they built kingdoms and bathed in blood. Glory and terror await in the shadows of the past...but beware, the darkness you need fear most is the darkness within yourself.

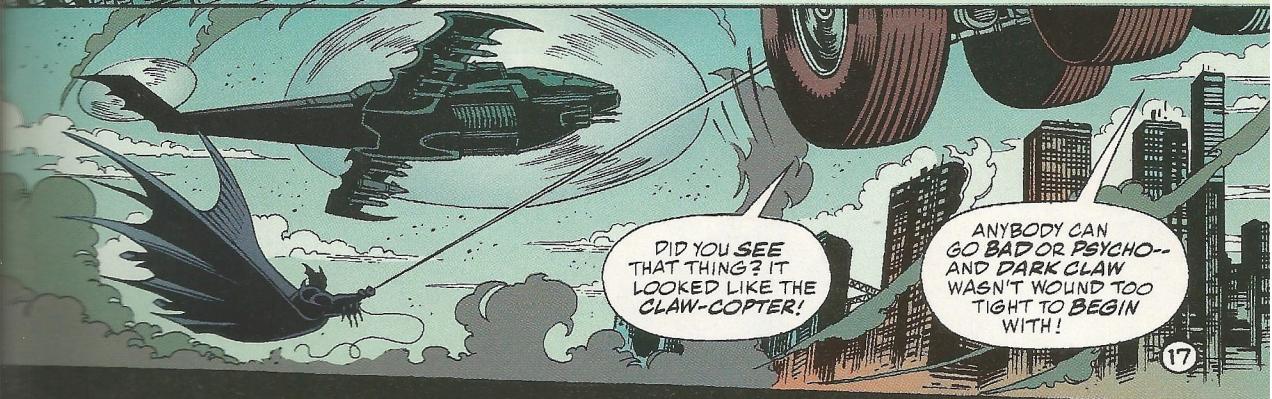


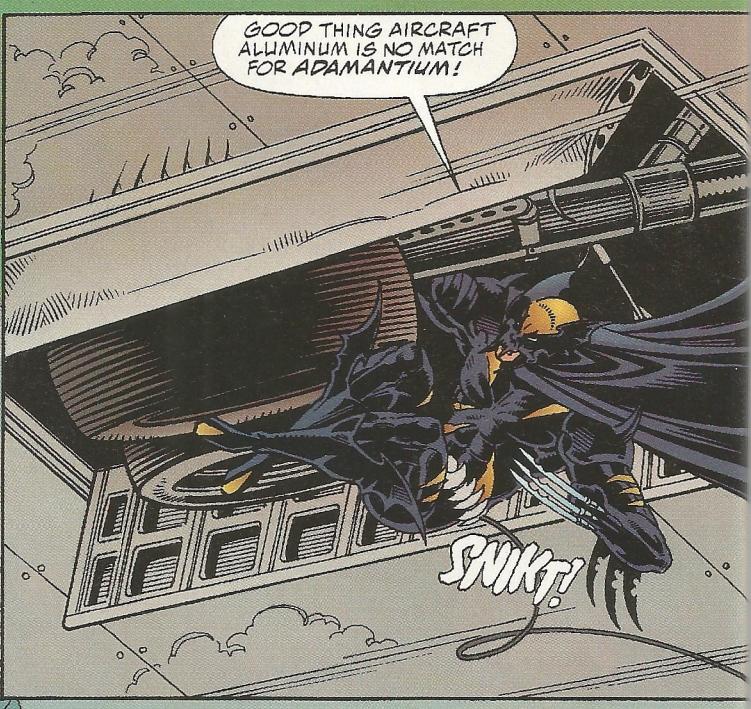
Vampire: The Dark Ages is a hardcover, stand-alone game that is completely compatible with **Vampire: The Masquerade**.

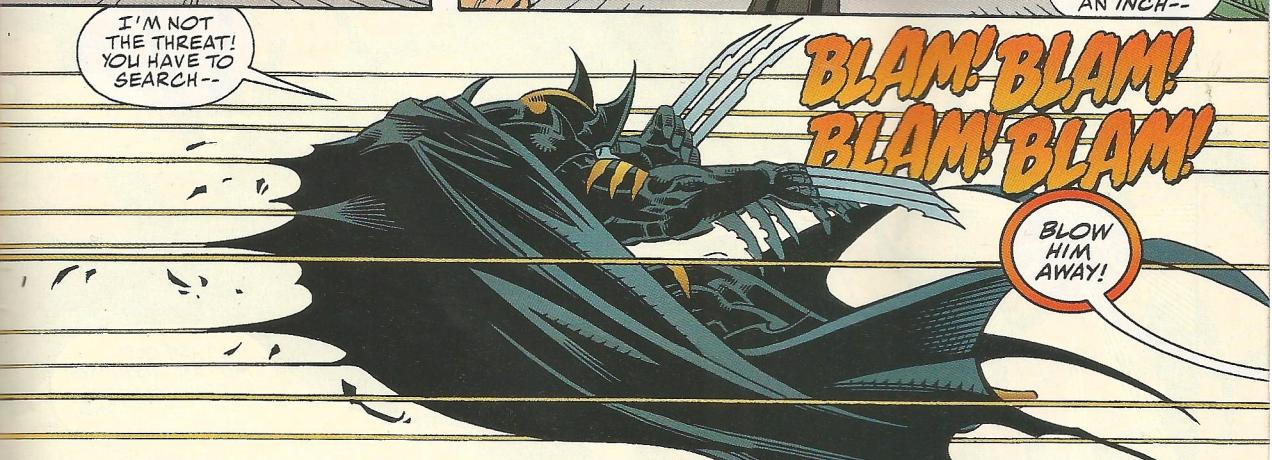
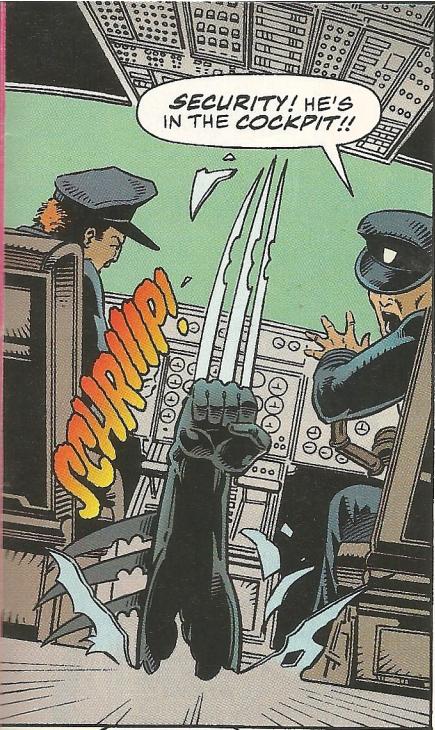
Spring, 1996

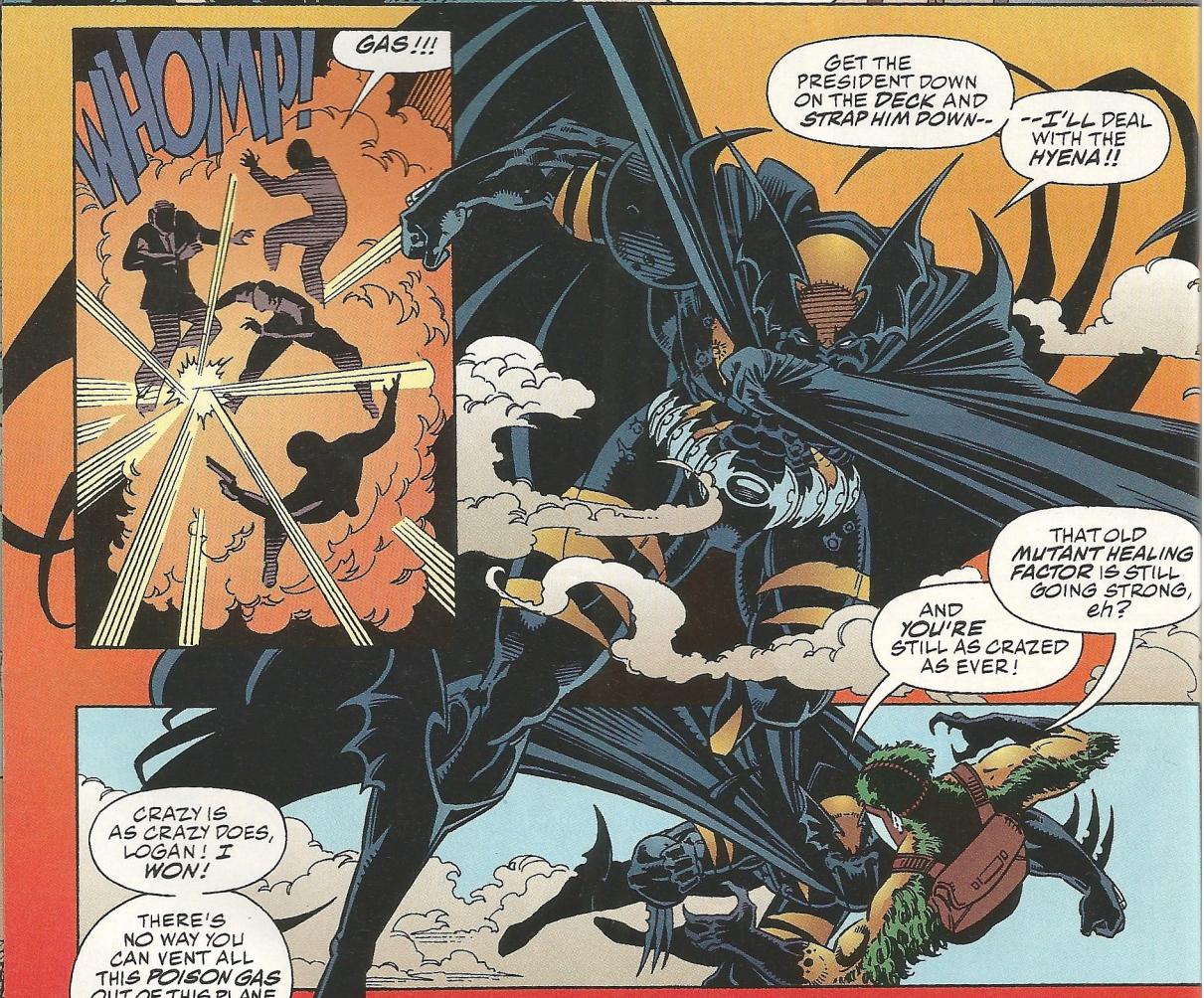
Featuring artwork by John Boltin













1996 FAN AWARDS

What are your favorites in the world of comics? *Comics Buyer's Guide*, the weekly newspaper devoted to the world of comic books, sponsors these awards to let you, the fan, cast your ballot in determining what the fan favorites are for the year.

RULES & REGULATIONS: Only material with a 1995 cover date can win. Votes for projects that did not have a 1995 publication date will not be counted. This ballot may be copied and passed on to your friends for their votes. Anyone who loves comics can vote - but only vote once. If you vote more than once, ALL your votes will be thrown out.

Vote only in the categories you want, and ignore any you don't. Every voter in the United States will get a free issue of **COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE** with the results (scheduled to be #1182, dated July 12, 1996), unless you already have a current subscription to **CBG**. Votes from other countries will be counted, but we regret that free copies of **CBG** can't be mailed out of the country unless your vote is accompanied by \$3.00 in U.S. funds to cover handling and shipping. The award winners will be announced at the Chicago Comicon, held June 20 - 23, 1996.



Get ready for some explosive surprises and the **CBG** Fan Awards results at the 21st annual



Mail your ballot individually in a single envelope by April 30, 1996 to:
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- Please print clearly or type -

Name _____ Age _____ Male _____ Female (circle one)

Street or Box _____

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I got this ballot from: _____

1. FAVORITE EDITOR _____
2. FAVORITE WRITER _____
3. FAVORITE PENCILLER _____
4. FAVORITE INKER _____
5. FAVORITE COLORIST _____
6. FAVORITE PAINTER _____
7. FAVORITE LETTERER _____
8. FAVORITE COVER ARTIST _____
9. FAVORITE COMIC-BOOK STORY _____
10. FAVORITE COMIC BOOK _____
11. FAVORITE LIMITED COMIC-BOOK SERIES _____
12. FAVORITE ORIGINAL GRAPHIC NOVEL OR ALBUM _____
13. FAVORITE REPRINT GRAPHIC NOVEL OR ALBUM _____
14. FAVORITE CHARACTER _____

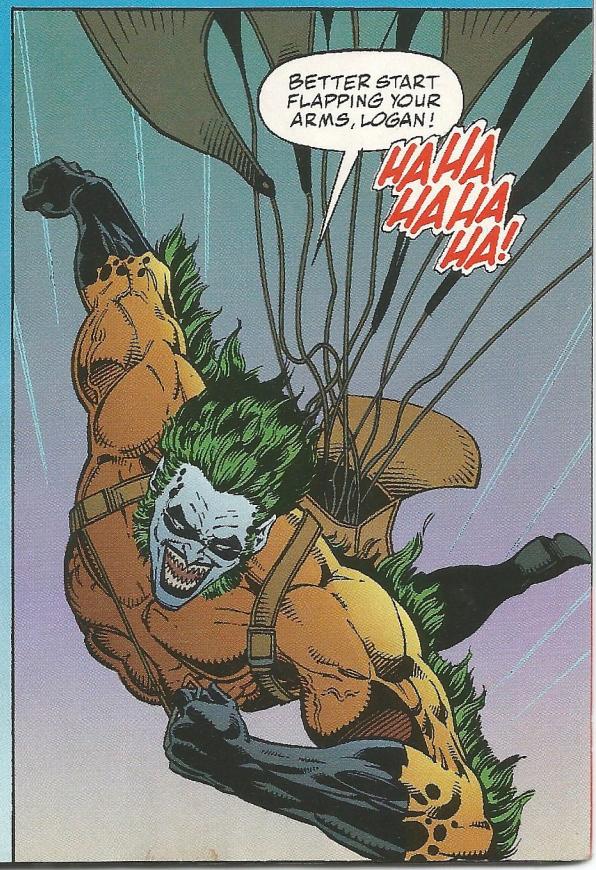
FROM THE JAWS OF DEFEAT...,

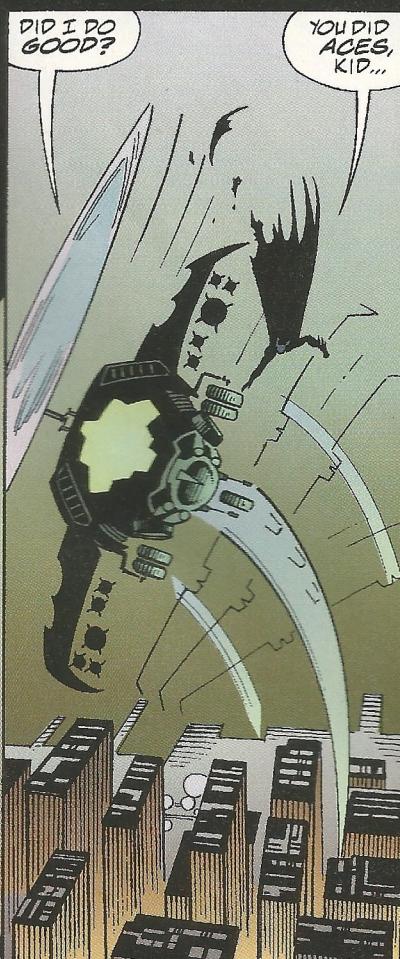
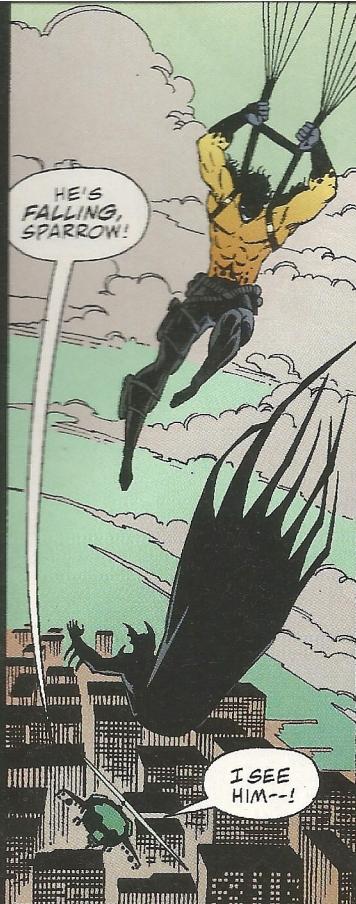


Issue #4

**THE GRAND FINALE
IN STORES NEXT WEEK.**

David • Jurgens • Castellini • Rubinstein • Neary





NEXT ISSUE:
THIS CLAW,
THIS CROSSBOW!!

Dear bodacious clawed one,

Congratulations on getting your own book, and about time if I don't say so myself! I am thoroughly blown away by awesome savagery in-your-face-ness and all that cool stuff you say when you're ripping the guts out of nasty bad guys and tearing their faces off with your adamantium claws! One thing, though: You ought to dump that wussy little whiner Jubilee and get yourself a REAL sidekick! I mean, what kind of cheap power is that she has anyway? You could replace her with a midget and a bag of firecrackers! Get somebody as bad and gnarly as the HYENA! Either that or some totally awesome BABE! Yeah! Some totally babed-out ultrawrist like some of those nice ladies they have on BAYWATCH! So that's the ticket, dudes—more ripping and stomping and punching claws through brains and tearing out spinal cords through left nostrils and more outrageous totally mind-boggling, to-sell-your-soul-for, never-dream-of-getting-near-one-in-the-real-world FURIOUSLY ENDOWED BABES!!!! Get the picture?

Zachary Feuer
Los Angeles, CA

We shall take your comments into consideration.



Dear Editorial People,

I am a long-time collector of Sleuth Comics. I own three complete sets in three condition grades as well as several hundred "traders." My devotion to this particular title has always had more to do with consistency of characterization and logical complexity of the story line rather than the "flavor of the month" art team. This is why I am profoundly disturbed by the current trend towards ret-con and revisionism. Don't you realize that these characters are standing upon several decades of accumulative history? How can you be so cavalier with story lines established by such giants of the industry as G. Waldo Emerson, Elihu Ramakrishna, Paul Kupperberg and E. Nelson Bridwell? Who is this upstart Larry Hama, anyway? Wasn't he the writer on "Sgt. Fury and the Combat-Happy Joes of Easy Company"? What kind of credentials are those for taking over a flagship character like Dark Claw? Larry Hama couldn't write his way out of a paper bag if it was on fire! He actually writes stories that have ENDINGS!! That's not what we want!! He doesn't make allusions to sitcoms, Star Trek, and other icons of pop culture. He doesn't even use CAPTIONS, for heaven's sake!!! How are we going to get our daily dose of purple prose without CAP-

SHRED 'EM AND WEEP

TIONS!! There are those of us out here who LIKE our comics to be pretentious!

Aemon Goldstein
Toronto, Ontario

Golly, Aemon, you certainly have opinions, don't you?



Dear Dark Claw Staff,

I am very pleased indeed with the current creative team on Dark Claw, and I am thrilled that the "Taloned Avenger" is getting his own title at last! I remember Mr. Balent's work from "John Jones, Vampire Hunter" and "Prince Namor the Aqua-Man" and I thought it was quite impressive back then, but lately, it seems he has really found his style and brought his drawing ability right up to the stellar level! I have always enjoyed Mr. Hama's writing and I appreciate the many literary allusions and asides he makes. I, too am a big fan of William Blake, W.B. Yeats and Cormac McCarthy. I was quite impressed with the whole "Agamemnon's Ghost" arc. The visual references to Goya, Bosch and Brueghel (the Elder) were so implicit to the plot, and that paraphrase of the subway sequence from B. Krigstein's "The Master Race" (E.C. Comics) was utterly mind-boggling. I did catch the reference to *The Trojan Women* and the casual aside about Raskalnikov climbing the stairs to murder the pawnbroker in *Crime and Punishment*! Keep up the good work!

Simon Fraser Cains
Anglesey, N. Wales



Dear Slicers and Dicers,

I wrote a song about Dark Claw. Here it is:

Who the baddest raddest dude?
Who got the style, who got the moves?
Who throws down on the gangstas and the rudes?
Who chucks the molesters off the roofs?
It's Dark Claw!
Snikt!
It's Dark Claw!
Sniktl
If you lootin' and shootin'

And a-bumpin' and a-thumpin'
You better get straight
Or you gonna get a lumpin'
'Cause the Clawed Canuck
Gonna mess you up
Gonna rip out your kidneys
And mail them down to Sidney
Australia and then he's punchin'

Your face into luncheon
Meat all covered with ketchup
While you just standin' there
Sayin' "What's up, what's up?"
And outside it's raining fists on your head
If you didn't know better, you think you
was dead
Dark Claw!
Snikt!
Dark Claw!
Snikt!

How do you like this song? It needs a heavy house beat with some rad samples. If you like it, I have hundreds more. Your best fan,

Tshonge Arbuthnot
Cleveland, OH

What can we say, Tshonge? We are touched, we are moved, we are transported. Hope to see more of your songs right here on these pages!



Dear Creators,

Thank you for remembering that there are a few of us left who appreciate a good story and who actually read the comic instead of bagging it in mint condition. I know you have to answer to the accountants and lawyers who run the corporation, and you have to make concessions to the sales department who pressure you to have big events and crossovers and metallic covers with die-cuts and holograms. It is a lot to stand up against. I just wanted to thank you for caring about the characters as much as the ordinary reader and giving us stories with real human impact.

Margo Bobarek
Staten Island

NEXT ISSUE: Whose side is the Huntress really on? You'll be devastated when you learn the awesome answer in—"This Claw, This Crossbow!"

Cover credits: Jumpin' Jim Balent, pencils; Roarin' Ray McCarthy, inks; Maulin' Matt Hollingsworth, colors and separations.

AMALGAM

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AMALGAM NATION

CARWALD'S CORNERBOX

Greetings, Amalgamaniacs! This is the month it happens—where the Amalgam Universe busts wide open and we launch twelve (count 'em—twelve) new titles featuring some of your favorite Amalgamated superstars in their own titles at last! This is a comic book counterrevolution and you, sensation-seekers, are getting in on ground zero!

We could heap on more hype, but instead we'd like to shift gears a moment and talk about something truly important in the cosmic scheme—namely, brotherhood. Friends, go out and make an effort to get along with someone whose ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, or comic book preference is unlike your own. After all, we're all passengers on the same planet going 'round, and when it gets down to it, everybody wants the same basic things out of life. So let's each do our part to make the ride go a bit smoother. Says us!

Now, with that off our chest, we want to remind you, the second wave of the Amalgam Era of Comics is now upon us! And it wouldn't be happening if you mighty Amalgamites didn't demand it. Accelerate!

—M.M. CARWALD



LEGEND OF THE DARKCLAW #1: The adamantium-clawed nocturnal protector of New Gotham is joined by Sparrow, his spunky protégé, in his war against the feral and psychotic Hyena! By Larry Hama, Jim Balent, and Ray McCarthy.



BRUCE WAYNE, AGENT OF S.H.I.E.L.D. #1: Driven by the murder of his parents, a grim multibillionaire focuses his rage by forging Amalgam's premier espionage strike force! Now Wayne and his agents have to save the East Coast from the depredations of the Green Skull! By Chuck Dixon and Cary Nord!



X-PATROL #1: Ferro-Man! Elasti-Girl! Dial H.U.S.K.! Niles Cable! Shatterstarfire! Beastling! Six outsiders unite for the first time to face the dreaded despot known as Doctor Doomsday! By Karl Kesel, Barbara Kesel, Roger Cruz, and Jon Holdredge!



JLX #1: They're outlaws hated by the world they've sworn to protect—and hounded by the avenging heroes of the JLA. Even if they survive the awesome assault of Amalgam's mightiest heroes, they must still face the discovery that a member of their squad is not what he appears to be! By Mark Waid, Gerard Jones, Howard Porter, and John Dell!



SPIDER-BOY #1: He's the world-famous web-slinging superstar, he can stick to walls, and his crash pad is the Baxter Building—not bad for a teenaged punk! Now two obstacles loom in the path of the amazing archkid—Bizarro and King Lizard! By Karl Kesel and Mike Wieringo!



BULLETS & BRACELETS #1: Years ago an unlikely romantic interlude between Trevor Castle and Diana of Themyscira produced a child. Now this punishing man and wonderful woman must unite once more to save their son from Thanosed! By John Ostrander, Gary Frank, and Cam Smith!



AMAZON #1: Reared on the island of Themyscira, weather-wielding mutant Ororo Munroe battles the very gods of legend she has been taught to worship! By John Byrne and Terry Austin!



DOCTOR STRANGEFATE #1: Amalgam's Supreme Lord of Order, Doctor Strangefate, will do anything to preserve the Amalgam Universe—even kill the strange new hero Access! By Ron Marz, Jose Luis Garcia-Lopez, and Kevin Nowlan!



ASSASSINS #1: Dare and Catsai—two of Amalgam's deadliest femmes fatales—must negotiate the deathtraps of Arkham Tower to assassinate the mayor! By D.G. Chichester and Scott McDaniel!



MAGNETO & THE MAGNETIC MEN #1: Erik Magnus watched in horror as his comrades were slaughtered. Now utilizing the technology that his mutant-hating brother used to create the Sentinels, Magnus constructs five robots, each formed from a different metal, to protect his fellow Homo Superior. By Mark Waid, Gerard Jones, Jeff Matsuda, and Art Thibert!



SUPER-SOLDIER #1: Transformed by an experimental infusion of alien DNA, a mere mortal became the greatest fighting machine of World War II. Revived in modern times, the living legend must battle the Green Skull and Hydra while defending truth, justice, and the American way. By Mark Waid and Dave Gibbons!

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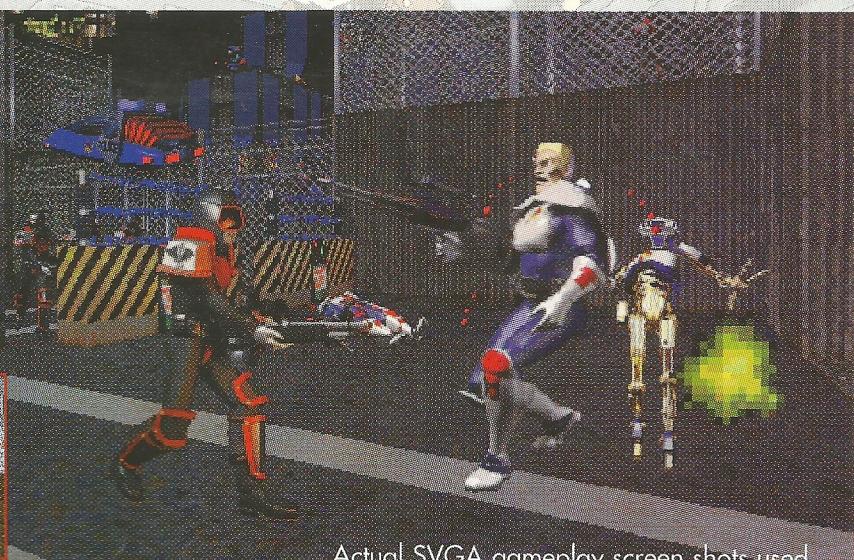
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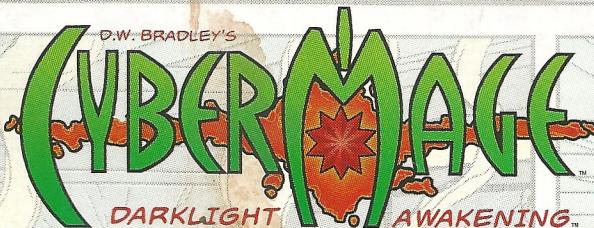
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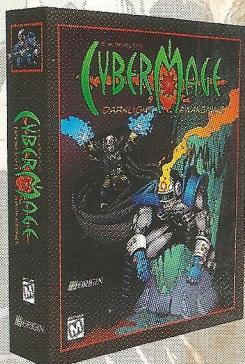
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